

**Top Secret**

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DIRECTORATE OF  
INTELLIGENCE

## MEMORANDUM

### *The Situation in Vietnam*

**Top Secret**

17 November 1966

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Information as of 1600

17 November 1966

25X

HIGHLIGHTS

Premier Ky and the other members of the ruling Directorate have apparently not yet made any final decisions on high-level command changes in the military establishment, particularly that of commander of the IV Corps.

I. The Military Situation in South Vietnam:  
The 19 allied battalions committed to Operation AT-TLEBORO today continued their penetration of War Zone "C"--the long-time Communist stronghold in northern Tay Ninh Province; however, no significant enemy contact was established (Paras. 1-2)

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A series of Viet Cong mortar attacks against US and GVN positions east and southwest of Saigon highlighted enemy activity initiated during the past 24 hours (Para. 5).

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losses sustained as a result of air strikes and fear of these strikes as major difficulties encountered by the 324th Division in its attempts to launch large-scale operations in northern South Vietnam (Paras. 6-7).

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III. North Vietnamese Military Developments: There is nothing of significance to report.

IV. Other Communist Military Developments: There is nothing of significance to report.

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VI. Other Major Aspects: The heaviest truck traffic through the Mu Gia Pass during a five-day period has been reported [redacted] (Paras. 1-3).

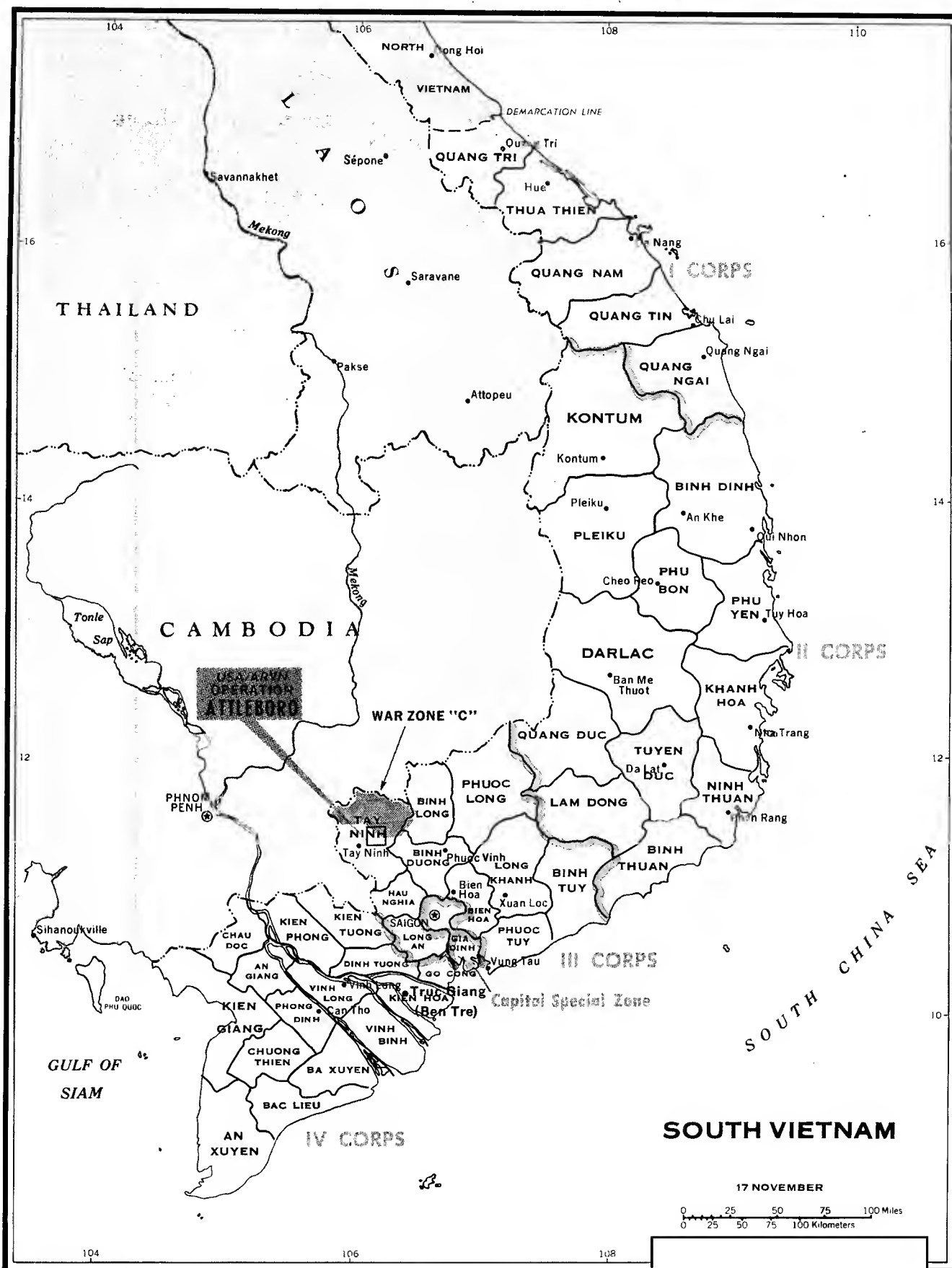
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17 November 1966

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I. THE MILITARY SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM

1. The largest allied task force ever fielded in the Vietnam war--17 US Army and two ARVN ranger battalions--today continued to probe deeper into War Zone "C"--the long-time Communist stronghold in northern Tay Ninh Province. No significant contact, however, was reported. Major enemy units thus far engaged by ATTLEBORO include the 9th Viet Cong Light Infantry Division and the 101st North Vietnamese Army Regiment. These units may have temporarily dispersed to more secure positions in the jungled interiors of the war zone.

2. Since its initiation on 14 October, Operation ATTLEBORO has resulted in cumulative enemy casualties of 971 killed, 40 captured, and 80 suspects apprehended, as against US losses of 97 killed and 312 wounded. In addition, allied forces have captured vast amounts of foodstuffs and war materiel, including an estimated 2,217 tons of rice, a division-sized ammunition dump, 133 individual and crew-served weapons, and extensive munitions production facilities.

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17 November 1966

I-1

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Viet Cong Activity

5. Viet Cong military activity during the past 24 hours was highlighted by a series of sharp mortar attacks against US and South Vietnamese positions east and southwest of Saigon. The US Army 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment's tactical command post in Long Khanh Province, about 40 miles east of Saigon, was shelled by approximately 53 mortar and recoilless rifle rounds. Six US personnel were wounded. Meanwhile, 45 miles southwest of Saigon, Communist mortar crews bombarded the Kien Hoa Province capital of Ben Tre, inflicting at least 11 civilian casualties. In addition, simultaneous mortar attacks were launched against five GVN paramilitary outposts ranging from 48 to 60 miles southwest of Saigon.

Difficulties Encountered by NVA 324th Division

6. [REDACTED]

some idea of the effect that air strikes were having on the ability of the 324th Division to launch large-scale operations in Quang Tri Province. [REDACTED]

ments made by unidentified representatives of the 324th Division's headquarters between late July and late August 1966. Of the five difficulties reportedly encountered by the division, three had to do with losses inflicted by air strikes or fear of these strikes on the part of the men. It was mentioned that

17 November 1966

greater losses were sustained as a result of air strikes than those inflicted in ground engagements. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] there was a lack of information on enemy plans and strength, and a lack of determination to fight the enemy on the part of both cadre and troops.

7. Concentrated air strikes on both sides of and in the Demilitarized Zone during July and August, coupled with US search-and-destroy operations HASTINGS and PRAIRIE, hindered Communist operations in northern Quang Tri Province. US pilots reported a large number of secondary explosions and fires from their strikes in [REDACTED]

17 November 1966

I-3



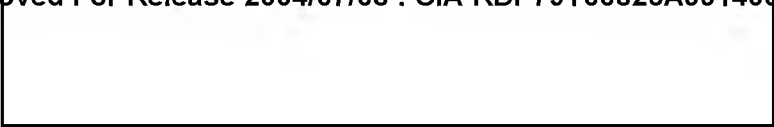
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III. NORTH VIETNAMESE MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS

1. There is nothing of significance to report.

IV. OTHER COMMUNIST MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS

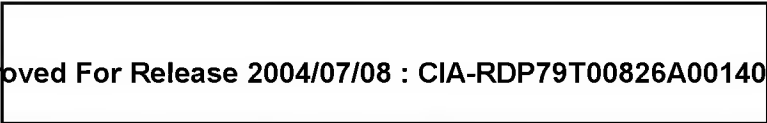
1. There is nothing of significance to report.

17 November 1966

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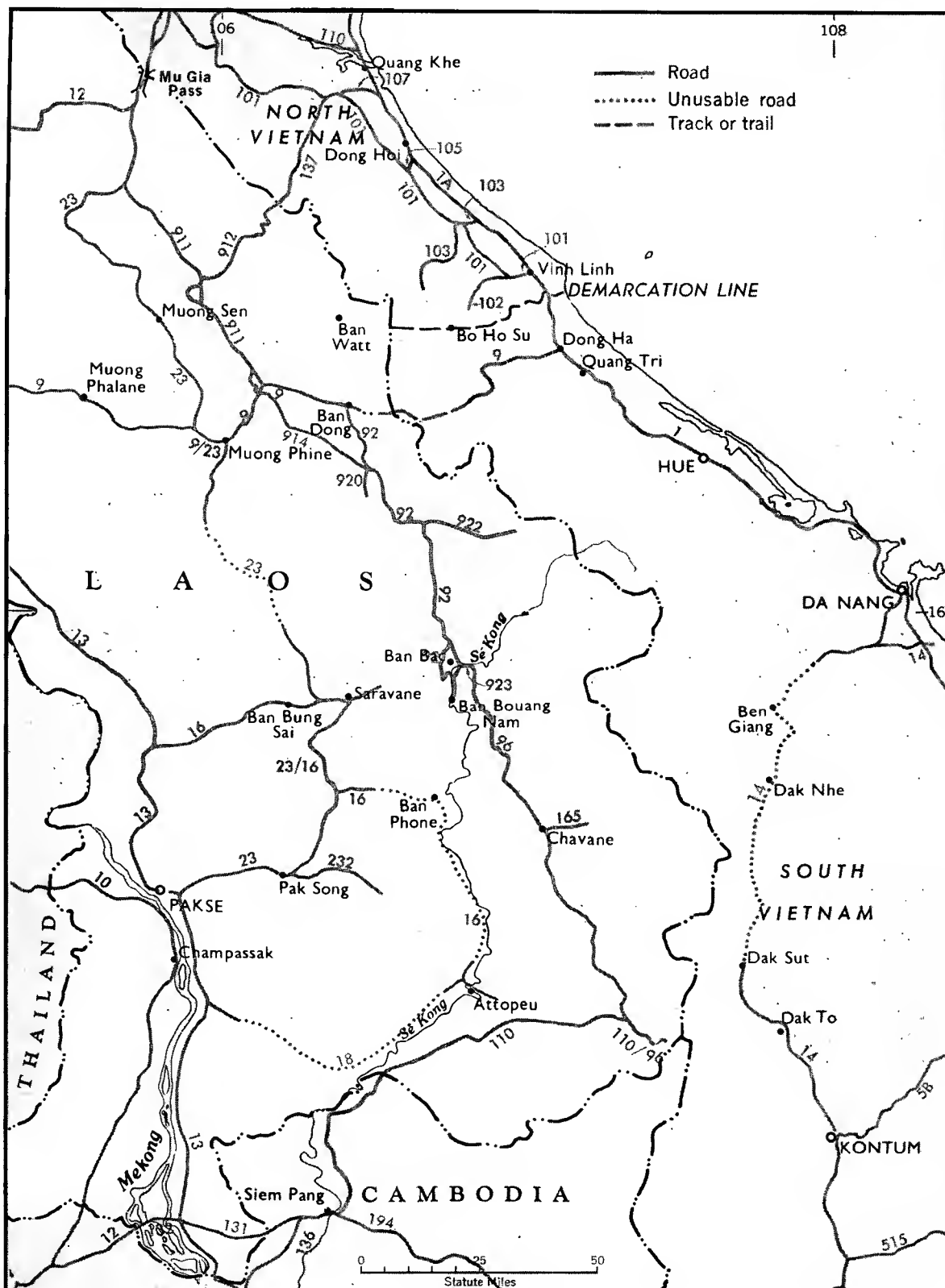


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# LAOS PANHANDLE



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VI. OTHER MAJOR ASPECTS

X1 1. [redacted] between 6 and 11 November about 250 trucks moved from North Vietnam through the Mu Gia Pass south into the Laos panhandle and about 90 trucks moved back to North Vietnam.

2. This is the heaviest truck traffic ever reported through the pass during a five-day period. It is possible that during the same period, other trucks may have moved over Route 912--the other road from North Vietnam into the panhandle. [redacted]

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X1 3. Some of the trucks were reported carrying gasoline drums and livestock, suggesting that supplies are being positioned prior to the resumption of traffic to the South Vietnamese border and to support work crews repairing rainy season damage to the roads in the panhandle. In late September truck traffic averaging about a dozen trucks a day began, but apparently had to be suspended in mid-October when unseasonal rains interfered.

4. Currently, at least the northern half of the panhandle road network is open to traffic. South of Route 9, general repairs had just begun during the first and second week of November.

17 November 1966

VI-1

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